

**6th Edition of the Common Academic Regulations for the
Award of Master of Research of the University of Wales**

Table of Contents

1	Introduction	2
2	Master of Research Degrees Covered by the Regulations.....	2
3	Structure, Eligibility and Modes of Study	3
4	Entrance Requirements	3
5	Enrolment	4
6	Progress, monitoring and reports.....	4
7	Matriculation	4
8	Approval of the Research Project.....	4
9	Date of Commencement of a Master of Research Degree.....	5
10	Required periods of study	5
11	Appointment of Supervisors	6
12	The Examining Board	6
13	Examinations.....	7
	Part One.....	7
	Part Two	8
14	Appeals	9
	Appendix: Format, Binding and Submission of Dissertations	10
	1. Format of the Dissertation.....	10
	2. Binding of the Dissertation	12
	3. Submission of the Dissertation	13

1 Introduction

- 1.1 These pages comprise Regulations for Master of Research (M.Res.) degrees of the **University of Wales (hereafter referred to as 'the University')** offered at **Accredited and Affiliated Institutions ('Institutions')** and at **Collaborative Centres ('Centres')**.
- 1.2 The Regulations apply to candidatures commencing on, or after, 1 September 2012. Candidates registered at Institutions or Centres prior to this date are encouraged to contact the appropriate Academic Registry¹ in order to obtain advice on the Regulations which apply to their studies.
- 1.3 The Regulations seek to provide a framework which embodies nationally recognised good practice, together with practice derived from policies and/or codes of practice of such bodies as the Quality Assurance Agency, the national funding councils and research councils. The framework is therefore subject to annual review and will be amended from time to time in accordance with the requirements of the Academic Board.
- 1.4 The University aims to ensure:
- that its academic standards are equivalent to those of other UK higher education establishments and consistent with the Quality Assurance Agency Framework for Higher Education Qualifications *and*
 - that the quality of provision gives candidates a fair and reasonable chance to gain a qualification in an acceptable timeframe.
- 1.5 Regulations for the format, binding and submission of theses are set out in the Appendix hereto.
- 1.6 All candidates who are registered under the following Regulations should be aware that Institutions or Centres may have in place additional supporting guidelines and related documentation, and again advice should be sought from the appropriate Academic Registry. In particular, candidates are required to familiarise themselves with the contents of the relevant Programme Handbook which will be available from the Institution or **Centre at which they are registered, together with the University's Code of Practice for Master of Research Degrees**. Documents such as these give advice and guidance, but are subordinate to the Regulations.

2 Master of Research Degrees Covered by the Regulations

- 2.1 The Degree of Master of Research under these regulations is awarded in recognition of the successful completion of an approved taught course, henceforward referred to as Part One, together with successful completion of further study and research, the results of which are judged to demonstrate originality in the application of knowledge, together with a practical understanding of how established techniques of research and enquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge in the discipline concerned. It is classed as a research degree.
- 2.2 **The title 'Master of Research' of the University** may not be conferred *honoris causa*.

¹ The term Academic Registry should be taken to mean the Academic Registry, or equivalent authority, of the Institution/Centre, at which the candidate is registered for study.

3 Structure, Eligibility and Modes of Study

- 3.1 The programme will comprise 180 credits with a minimum of 150 credits at level 7 (masters level) and the remainder at level 6 (honours degree level). More than 90 credits at level 7 will be associated with the research component of the award.
- 3.2 The programme will be managed by a Programme Director with overall responsibility for the programme, in particular the taught components, together with a Programme Research Co-ordinator (or equivalent) with particular responsibility for dissertations.
- 3.3 Candidates for the degree will be examined in two parts. Part One will comprise a minimum of 60 credits and a maximum of 90 credits of taught material, including an introduction to research ethics and to qualitative and quantitative research methods appropriate to the discipline. Part Two will be research focused and completed by the presentation of a dissertation and any portfolio of supporting material embodying the methods and results of the research.
- 3.4 Applicants for the award of Master of Research are required to matriculate, where they have not already done so, maintain their enrolment, pay all applicable fees and pursue an approved programme for the award for the minimum period required for one of the four modes of study permitted in paragraph 3.5 of the Regulations below.
- 3.5 Candidates may undertake study for the award of Master of Research by one of the following modes:
- i. pursuit of a full-time Master of Research programme at an Institution or Centre;
 - ii. pursuit of a full-time Master of Research programme in an external place approved by the University for the purposes of undertaking such a programme;
 - iii. pursuit of a part-time Master of Research programme at an Institution or Centre;
 - iv. pursuit of a part-time Master of Research programme externally.

4 Entrance Requirements

- 4.1 The normal minimum entrance requirement for applicants for candidature for Master of Research degrees is a second class honours degree relevant to the programme and awarded by a UK or other recognised University or higher education institution, or by the Council for National Academic Awards (CNAA).
- 4.2 Applicants who do not possess the normal minimum entrance qualifications, but hold another qualification or have experience at a level which the University of Wales considers to be equivalent to, or higher than, that of a second class honours degree of a UK University may be considered for candidature on their merits. In such cases, the Institution or Centre will take whatever steps are deemed necessary to undertake research of the candidate, and will make **the case for approval to the University's Degrees and Academic Awards Board.**²
- 4.3 In addition to the above entrance requirements, candidates must be capable of satisfying the relevant academic authorities with regard to their proficiency in Welsh or English at a level necessary to complete the programme of work in the chosen language and to prepare and defend a dissertation and any portfolio in that language.

² Reference to Degrees and Academic Awards Board should be taken to mean the Board of the Academic Board of the University of Wales. (See also note 3, below, which concerns Research Degrees Committees).

Proficiency in English of candidates whose first language is not Welsh or English is normally evidenced by a minimum IELTS score (or equivalent) of 6.5 at entry with a minimum of 6.5 in the reading and written components. Candidates will be asked to provide such evidence as is deemed necessary by the University.

5 Enrolment

- 5.1 Candidates for the award of Master by Research are required to complete the appropriate enrolment form and to produce such formal identification documents as may be required by the Institution or Centre. Upon enrolment candidates will be responsible for the payment of fees.

6 Progress, monitoring and reports

- 6.1 The Institution or Centre will establish at least annually whether candidates are:
- i. still actively engaged with their programme and making satisfactory progress;
 - ii. after progressing to Part Two, maintaining regular and frequent contact with the supervisory team;
 - iii. likely to complete successfully within the normal permissible timescale.
- 6.2 In cases where a candidate does not complete the award within one year, the Research Degrees Committee ³ will determine whether progress is satisfactory and whether re-enrolment should be permitted. Candidates may appeal against a decision to terminate their studies.
- 6.3 Candidates are encouraged at any time to inform the Research Degrees Committee of issues affecting satisfactory progress by submitting a candidate report form.
- 6.4 An annual report on the programme must be made to the Degrees and Academic Awards Board of the University.

7 Matriculation

- 7.1 **Matriculation is the formal validation of candidates' qualifications for a scheme of study leading to a degree or other academic award of the University of Wales.** Candidates who are not graduates of the University are required to matriculate before enrolment. Details of the process for matriculation may be obtained from the Academic Registry, or equivalent, of the Institution or Centre.

³ References to Research Degrees Committee should be taken to mean the Research Degrees Committee

of the Institution or Centre.

7.2 Applicants who do not matriculate are not eligible to register for the degree.

8 Approval of the Research Project

8.1 During, or immediately following, completion of Part One, candidates for the award of Master of Research of the University must obtain the approval from the Programme Research Co-ordinator for their research project as described on the Master of Research **Proposal form**. A list of projects must be presented to the Institution's or Centre's Research Degrees Committee at the first available opportunity.

8.2 The Programme Research Co-ordinator may approve research projects or may withhold approval on academic grounds, including inadequate or inappropriate research methodology or facilities. Where the research involves human participants, human material, personal data or animals, ethical approval must be obtained from a Research Ethics Committee approved by the **University's Research Ethics Committee**.

9 Date of Commencement of a Master of Research Programme

The date of commencement of a programme of study leading to the award of Master of Research is the date of first enrolment.

10 Required Periods of Study

10.1 The required periods of study for candidates pursuing the award of Master of Research of the University are given below, with reference to the methods of candidature identified in section 3. Appropriate adjustments may be considered for candidates who, by applying to the Research Degrees Committee, receive approval for a change to their mode of candidature.

i. Full-time candidates (see sub-paragraphs 3.2(i) and 3.2(ii)).

<i>minimum</i>	<i>maximum for dissertation submission</i>
1 year	2 years

ii. Part-time candidates (see sub-paragraph 3.2(iii) and 3.2(iv)).

<i>minimum</i>	<i>maximum for dissertation submission</i>
2 years	4 years

10.2 The required periods of study do not include periods when study has been suspended in accordance with paragraph 10.4.

- 10.3 Maximum enrolment periods may only be extended in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the Research Degrees Committee. Such requests will normally be considered in the light of the advice of the Director of Studies and academic authorities of the Institution or Centre.
- 10.4 Candidates may apply for the study period to be suspended where exceptional circumstances prevent satisfactory progress. Periods of suspension of up to one year may be recommended. Where a second period of suspension is applied for, it will only be granted if the exceptional circumstances are likely to be sufficiently resolved before the end of the second period of suspension for the candidate to complete the research programme without further application for suspension.
- 10.5 The time between the minimum and maximum period of study is known as the continuation period. Candidates may be required to pay a fee for the continuation period as determined by the Institution/Centre of study. During the continuation period, candidates should expect continued supervision at an appropriate level as defined by the Institution/Centre.

11 Appointment of Supervisors

- 11.1 From the time of acceptance of the research proposal, candidates for the award of Master of Research must have a supervisor approved by the Research Degrees Committee who must be a member of academic staff of the Institution or Centre, with a contract equivalent to at least 0.4 of a full time post. All supervisors should be listed on the appropriate University of Wales Register. The second member of the supervisory team will normally be the Programme Research Co-ordinator.
- 11.2 The supervisor must have evidence of recent research activity in the subject area of the research project as well as such other expertise as is required to complete the supervisory duties of the team.
- 11.3 Individuals with specialist expertise relevant to the research project, who do not qualify as supervisors, may be appointed to the team as advisors.

12 The Examining Board

- 12.1 There shall be a Progression Board for Part One of the programme. The Progression Board shall comprise:
- i. Chair;
 - ii. Programme Director;
 - iii. Programme Research Co-ordinator;
 - iv. members of the Programme Team;
 - v. for Centres, the University of Wales Moderator for the programme;
 - vi. for Centres, an administrative representative of the University of Wales;
 - vii. **at least one External Examiner appointed according to the University's regulations for taught programmes.**
- 12.2 There shall be a separate Examination Board for each candidate for Part Two of the programme. The function of such Examination Boards is to

ascertain that the dissertation and any portfolio submitted for award is at the appropriate standard, that it is the work of the candidate who is being examined and that the candidate displays the attributes expected of holders of the award.

12.3 An Examining Board for Part Two shall normally comprise the following:

- i. Chair;
- ii. Internal Examiner;
- iii. External Examiner.

12.4 Where it is impossible to appoint an appropriate internal examiner from within the Centre, an internal examiner from another Centre, or from one of the Accredited Institutions of the University of Wales may be appointed.

12.5 In cases including those where:

- i. the candidate is a member of staff of the Centre;
- ii. it proves impossible to appoint an internal examiner either from within the Centre, or from another such Centre of the University of Wales, or from one of the Accredited Institutions of the University of Wales;
- iii. **a case is made for an examiner who has specialist knowledge of the candidate's field, but who does not meet the normal criteria for an External Examiner;**
- iv. a special case has been made to, or by, the Degrees and Academic Awards Board;

the Examining Board shall instead comprise:

- i. Chair;
- ii. External Examiner;
- iii. External Examiner.

12.6 The Chair must be suitably trained and experienced and normally a Head of Department or Dean (or a senior member of staff nominated by them) in the Institution or Centre in which the candidate to be examined is enrolled. In Institutions or Centres with small numbers of staff where independence of the Chair becomes problematic, a Chair may be appointed from another Institution or Centre. The composition of Examining Boards is arranged by Research Degrees Committees.

12.7 **A member of a supervisory team must not be appointed as the candidate's examiner.**

12.8 The External Examiner(s) must be aware of the nature and purpose of the degree for which the candidate is being examined and must possess specialist knowledge and expertise in the area of the research project, and, in addition, knowledge of the UK higher education sector and experience in examining dissertations at masters level.

13 Examinations

Part One

13.1 Part One shall comprise examinations of an advanced character in fields of study prescribed by the programme concerned. These examination may include evaluation of any professional/industrial practice and training and may take the form of unseen written examination papers, or set projects or other forms of course assessment. The pass mark for each component shall be set at 40% and compensation within and between components is only permitted if specified at the time of validation of the award. Where compensation is

permitted within a single module, the overall pass mark for that module must not be less than 40% and no individual assessment mark must be less than 35%. Where compensation is permitted between modules, the overall average mark for Part One must not be less than 40%, all module marks must be greater than 35% and no more than 25% of Part One credits may be compensated in this way. Exemptions may be granted from **specified components of Part One of the programme by means of the University's** procedures for APL and APEL, but such exemptions should not exceed 50% of Part One credits.

The Progression Board should make a recommendation for each candidate that they:

- i. may progress to Part Two of the programme with the possibility of achieving an award with Distinction (only in cases where the candidate has achieved an overall average of 70% or more)
 - ii. may progress to Part Two of the programme;
 - iii. failed.
- 13.2 A candidate who is absent from the whole, or part, of a written examination in any year will normally be expected to re-sit the whole of that examination. In certain circumstances, however, permission may be granted for a supplementary examination to be held or for other forms of supplementary assessment to take place. A candidate who is permitted to take examinations from which he/she had originally been absent may be permitted, at the discretion of the Progression Board, to do so after a period of not more than fifteen months from the date of the original examination.
- 13.3 A candidate who fails may, with the permission of the Progression Board, re-present himself/herself for examination once only. Re-examination shall take place within a period of not more than fifteen months from the date of the original examination. At the discretion of the Progression Board, such a candidate may:
- i. be required to repeat the course and be re-examined in the written examinations or set projects or other forms of course assessments as a whole;
or
 - ii. be required to be re-examined in the written examinations or set projects or other forms of course assessment as a whole or in those parts of the examination or set projects or other forms of course assessment which he/she has failed.

Re-examined work shall be eligible only for the minimum pass mark. A fee for re-examination may be payable.

- 13.4 A candidate who is to be re-examined in set projects or other forms of course assessment under sub-paragraphs (i) or (ii) above shall not be permitted, except in the case of clinical or practical components, to resubmit modified versions of his/her original work, but shall be required to submit for examination new work on different topics from those which originally failed to satisfy the examiners. In the case of clinical or practical components, the Progression Board may permit a candidate to submit for re-examination modified work based on the original clinical or practical experience.

Part Two

- 13.5 A candidate shall have successfully completed Part One assignments by a date specified by the Examining Board before being permitted to present the dissertation and any portfolio for examination.
- 13.6 Candidates for Part Two of a Master of Research programme are examined on their

submitted research work. In judging the merit of the dissertation and any portfolio submitted in candidature for the degree, the examiners shall bear in mind the scope of work previously completed for Part One of the programme and the standard and scope of work for Part Two which it is reasonable to expect a capable and diligent student to present.

The examination process comprises an independent examination of the dissertation and any portfolio by the internal and external examiners, who are approved for the purpose by the University and who shall prepare independent reports on the dissertation and any portfolio and make a joint recommendation:

- i. that the candidate be approved for the degree of Master of Research; *or*
- ii. that the candidate be approved for the degree of Master of Research, subject to satisfactory completion of such corrections and amendments as may be required by the Examining Board. The Examining Board may stipulate that the corrections made shall be scrutinised by either or both examiners prior to the award process being initiated. Normally corrections shall be completed within 6 working weeks from the date of official notification to the candidate of the outcome of the examination; *or*
- iii. that the candidate be allowed to modify the dissertation and any portfolio and re-submit it for re-examination for the degree of Master of Research on one further occasion, upon payment of any required re-submission fee. The re-submission is to take place within a period not exceeding one year from the date of official notification to the candidate of the outcome of the examination. (This option is not available in the case of a candidate who has resubmitted a dissertation and any portfolio for examination); *or*
- iv. that the candidate be not approved for the degree of Master of Research, but be approved instead for an appropriate postgraduate diploma, as specified in the relevant Programme Handbook and based on Part One of the programme; *or*
- v. that the candidate be not approved for the award of a degree.

In cases (i) and (ii), those candidates who achieved 70% or more in Part One may be considered by the examiners for an award with distinction.

- 13.7 In the event of disagreement between the examiners as to the outcome, the Chair will facilitate a discussion to resolve this. If no agreement can be reached, a further External Examiner will be appointed.

14 Appeals

- 14.1 Candidates have the right to appeal against decisions concerning approval of proposals, termination of study or, in certain established circumstances, against the outcome of the examination process, in accordance with the procedures established for the purpose.

Appendix: Format, Binding and Submission of Dissertations

1. *Format of the Dissertation*

1.1 **A candidate's research** for the award of Master of Research is to be completed by the presentation of a dissertation and, where appropriate, a portfolio embodying the methods and results of the research.

1.2 The dissertation and any portfolio are to be written in Welsh or English. The use of brief quotations in other languages is permitted. The length of the dissertation must be appropriate to the subject area covered and to the number of credits associated with Part Two of the programme. In no case should it exceed 40,000 words, excluding footnotes, appendices and references.

Appendices can be included in the thesis for the presentation of data and/or material which the examiners are not required to read in order adequately to examine the thesis, but to which they may refer if they wish.

1.4 Candidates following approved research degree projects which fall within the subject area of Creative and Performance Arts, may make a submission which takes one or more of the following forms: artefact, score, portfolio of original works, performance or exhibition. The submission shall include a commentary or textual analysis of 2,000–3,000 words placing it in its academic context and which shall form part of the total body of written material, the maximum for which shall be 20,000 words. This written material must contain a critical reflection on the research methodology and methods used, indicate the originality in the **application of knowledge, which, in the candidate's opinion, the work has made and** articulate a rationale to prove at least equivalence to the standard normally demonstrated by a successful MRes dissertation.

1.5 A dissertation of greater length than provided above may be submitted only with the approval of the Research Degrees Committee. A request to exceed the specified maximum must be made to the Research Degrees Committee well in advance of the notification of submission of the dissertation.

1.6 There is no specification for the internal format of the dissertation, but the structure should be discussed with the supervisors and should be the structure most appropriate to the subject area. Examiners will expect a dissertation to be well presented with a consistent system of indexing and referencing throughout the work.

1.7 All copies of dissertations, whether for the purpose of examination or for deposit in libraries, must be presented in permanent and legible form in typescript or print and electronic format. An electronic copy should be in Adobe PDF format (for guidance on file formats and conversion see 'E-dissertation submission procedure'). The characters employed in the main text (but not necessarily in illustrations, maps, etc.) shall be not less than 12pt; characters employed in all other texts, notes, footnotes, etc, shall be not less than 10pt. Typing must be capable of photographic reproduction and of even quality with clear black characters. Double or one-and-a-half spacing is to be used in the main text and single spacing is to be used in the summary and in any indented quotations and footnotes.

1.8 Drawings and sketches must be in black ink; unnecessary details are to be omitted and the scale is to be such that the minimum space between lines is not less than 1 mm. Colour graphics for charts, diagrams etc and colour photographs may be used, but candidates must in all cases ensure that material is capable of being photocopied and microfilmed. Scanned images may be included in the electronic copy. Copies produced by xerographic or

comparable permanent processes are acceptable. Dissertations are to be produced on A4 paper (297mm x 210mm) of good quality and sufficient opacity for normal reading.

1.9 The minimum widths of margins are to be:

Inside margin	40mm
Top and outside margin	15mm
Bottom margin	20mm

1.10 Pages are to be numbered consecutively. A contents list and table of illustrations (if any) must be provided.

The dissertation must contain within its binding:

- i. an abstract not exceeding 300 words to be located at the front of the dissertation;
- ii. a statement, signed by the candidate, showing to what extent the work submitted is **the result of the candidate's own investigation**;
- iii. a declaration, signed by the candidate, certifying that the work has not already been accepted in substance for any degree and is not being concurrently submitted in candidature for any degree;
- iv. a signed statement regarding the availability of the thesis (see paragraph 1.15).

1.11 The dissertation must contain on its title page:

- i. **the author's full name and degrees**;
- ii. the title;
- iii. the degree for which it is offered and the name of the awarding body;
- iv. the discipline or disciplines to which it pertains;
- v. the date of submission;
- vi. the names of the Director of Studies and supervisor(s);
- vii. the name(s) of any collaborating establishment;
- viii. a statement that the research was undertaken under the auspices of the Institution or Centre and was submitted in partial fulfillment for the award of a Degree of the University of Wales.

1.12 Candidates may submit material not bound with the dissertation if such material constitutes the most appropriate method of presenting the information concerned. Such material could include diagrams, maps and similar documents, or other material such as audio or video recordings, slides, films, etc. A list of such separate items is to be provided in the dissertation. Electronic copies of this additional material should be included alongside the electronic copy of the dissertation.

Any material of this type is to be enclosed in a container suitable for storage on a library shelf and bearing the same information as that required on the spine of the dissertation, so placed as to be readily legible when the container is in its stored position (see paragraph 2.2).

1.13 A dissertation submitted for a professional doctorate shall normally be openly available and subject to no security or restriction of access. The Degrees and Academic Awards Board, however, may approve recommendations from Research Degrees Committees that a bar on photocopying and/or access to a dissertation may be put in place for a specified period of up to five years. Wherever applicable, the candidate should make an application regarding photocopying and/or access to the dissertation to the Research Degrees Committee before or at the time of enrolment of the candidate's research project, or subsequently.

1.14 On submission of the dissertation, a candidate is required to sign a statement indicating:

- i. that the dissertation, if successful, may be made available for inter-library loan or

photocopying (subject to the law of copyright), and that the title and summary may be available to outside organisations;

- ii. that the University may store electronically, copy or translate the dissertation to any approved medium or format for the purpose of future preservation and accessibility;
 - iii. that the dissertation deposited in the digital repository will be accessible to a wide variety of people and institutions, including automated agents and search engines via the World Wide Web;
 - iv. that once the dissertation is deposited, the item and its metadata may be incorporated into public access catalogues or services, such as national databases of electronic theses;
- or*
- v. that the dissertation, if successful, may be made so available after the expiry of a bar on photocopying and/or access.

1.15 The title and summary of the thesis are normally freely available.

2. *Binding of the Dissertation*

2.1 A candidate submitting a higher degrees dissertation for examination may submit the dissertation in temporary binding. After examination all copies of the dissertation for library storage are to be permanently bound.

2.2 Temporary binding will enable the candidate to complete any corrections required by examiners without having to unbind and then rebuild the dissertation. For examination, all copies must have the leaves securely fixed within a folder or binder or by a spine (i.e. fixed so that the pages remain secure in the covers when the volume is opened fully). Folders that release the pages when opened, ring binders or loose pages submitted in a wallet folder are not acceptable.

2.3 A dissertation that is temporarily bound must be sufficiently secure to withstand transit. It **must bear on the spine, in a form that cannot easily be erased or detached, the candidate's name, the names of the University and Centre, and the degree for which he or she is a candidate.**

2.4 Following a successful examination and/or the satisfactory completion of revisions to the dissertation, the dissertation must be permanently bound for library deposition. Permanent binding requires that the dissertation is sewn with thread and bound in a fixed binding of black boards with cloth, or in full cloth, in the manner of a hardback book. The boards are to have sufficient rigidity to support the weight of the work when it is standing upon a shelf. In the case of all works which are to be deposited in libraries, the permanently bound volumes must bear on the spine the surname and initials of the candidate, the full or abbreviated title of the work, the name of the degree for which it was submitted and the date of submission. This information must be printed along the spine in such a way as to be readable when the volume is lying flat with the front cover uppermost. If the work consists of more than one volume the spine must also bear the number of each volume.

2.5 The same information is to appear on the front cover of the dissertation.

2.6 Lettering on the spine and front cover must be in gold.

3 *Submission of the Dissertation*

- 3.1 Within the enrolment period the candidate shall submit to the Academic Registry:
- i. two copies of the dissertation, whether in temporary or permanent binding, and any separate material;
 - ii. an additional loose copy of the abstract referred to in paragraph 1.8 transcribed onto the requisite form;
 - iii. a signed statement regarding the availability of the dissertation;
 - iv. **two completed 'Notice of Candidature' forms, copies of which are available from the Academic Registry;**
 - v. evidence required by the Centre to show that all obligations including payment of fees and monies due have been paid.
- 3.2.1 A candidate may not amend, add to, delete from or withdraw the dissertation after it has been submitted and prior to examination save with the consent of the Chair of the Examining Board.